

SEA Australia Pty Ltd Surf Educate Australia Program



SEA Venues: Manly, Dee Why, Collaroy, Mona Vale, Swansea Belmont, Mereweather, Wollongong City, Cronulla, Port Macquarie, Flynn's Beach, Byron Bay, Maroochydore, Forster, Shellharbour, Bonnie Hills

Risk Assessment and Occupational Health & Safety Management Plan

SEA Australia–General Safety Plan

This document details the procedures for the safety of all people, both participants and staff as well as the general public during SEA programs. It covers the handling of emergency situations until the appropriate emergency service arrives and takes control. It also covers general safety and environmental risk, program safety, precautions and procedures. This document should be accompanied by the SEA Instructors Manual.

Objective:

The safety of all persons in the area of business; including staff, public, and participants, in all events is paramount. This Safety Plan is written documentation, which clearly establishes:

- The identified risks
- The assessment of these risks.
- The management of these risks.
- The operating procedures
- Identifying key safety locations (Rally points and first aid base)
- Safety Equipment (location and use)
- Communication methods and equipment
- The methods of evaluating these procedures
- Personnel responsible for assuring quality of safety

Glossary

Beach Access: The area between transport drop off points, and the sand or facilities to be used by SEA.

Bronze Medallion (or equivalent): The SLSA basic lifesaving certificate also known as Certificate II in Public Safety (Aquatic Rescue), as well as any certificate obtained throughout the world which is recognized by the International Lifesaving Federation as an Equivalent to the ILS Surf Lifeguard Certificate.

Craft: Surfboards used by SEA as part of our programs. All boards are foam with handles fixed to the deck to provide maximum safety when students fall off the board. All boards meet SLSA/Council regulations for use between the flags, in the swimming area, and the buffer zone.

Dehydration: The loss of fluids from the body which may result in dizziness, headache, lack of sweating (dry skin), thirst and discomfort.

Drops and Ledges: Any drop, ledge, or wall measuring one meter or more within the SEA operating area.

First Aid Base: A predetermined location which provides shelter, and includes the storage of first aid equipment.

Insurance: Public Liability Insurance.

Injury: Damage or harm caused to the structure of the body by any outside force.

Dangerous Surf: Surf which is deemed by the venue operator/manager, and head instructors in consultation with lifeguards to be too dangerous to safely operate the program.

Lifeguard: Water safety, rescue and first aid expert who is employed to work at the beach venue by council or councils agent.

Lifesaver: A volunteer who engages in water safety, rescue, and first aid tasks under the auspices of Surf Life Saving Australia, and its affiliates.

Marine Life: All sea creatures which can be encountered in the surf zone of the beach. Primarily referring to marine stingers, but also including baitfish, sharks, stingrays, dolphins, etc.

Medical Emergency: Any injury which cannot be thoroughly treated through basic first aid practices. All medical emergencies require emergency services to be called to the site.

Ocean Knowledge: A student's understanding of key hazards in the coastal environment and their ability to behave in a manner which minimizes these threats.

Participants: Any person undertaking an SEA program including school teachers and students.

Pool: Any rockpool, or sheltered ocean area with net which provides flat, still water for basic instruction.

Public: All beachgoers outside of the SEA staff and participants, including those on walkways, roads, and facilities used at SEA Venues.

Rip Currents: A deeper area of the surf zone, allowing water to flow and recede back from the shoreline into the deeper area behind the impact zone. Identified by dark water, with fewer or no waves breaking. Most rip currents end at the impact zone, where the water is returned to the shore by the breaking waves.

Sandbars: The shallow section of water within the surf zone, designated by a wide area of regular breaking waves from the impact zone through to the shoreline.

SEA: Surf Educate Australia Programs (SEA Australia Pty Ltd)

Sharps: Any broken glass, seashells, or syringes within SEA operating area.

Staff/Instructor (Water Safety, Head Instructor, Venue Manager/Operator): Any person under employment by SEA as water safety, instructor, head instructor, venue manager, venue operator, or operations manager. All staff meet required qualifications, and undergo Working With Children Background Checks.

Surfcraft Area: The area outside the blue flags, indicating an area where all surfcraft are permitted.

Swash Zone: The area between the shoreline and the breaking waves.

Swim Ability: Students' parents or guardians are asked to notify SEA and the School of the participants' swimming ability. The abilities are then ranked and participants are encouraged to wear coloured wrist bands indicating their swimming ability as per Department of Education recommendations.

Swimming Area (Flags): The space between the red and yellow flags on the beach designated as the swimming area and patrolled by either lifeguards or lifesavers. Not to be referred to as the 'safe, safer, or safest' area.

Undertow: A common name for rip currents, undertows do not physically drag anything down under the water surface.

Identified Risks:

Numerical data for programs such as these does not exist. As a result a qualitative analysis of the programs has been conducted to identify risks. This analysis takes into account past experience of similar programs.

Pre-program Risks:

Behavioural Factors

Lack of ocean knowledge
Lack of beach knowledge
Public
Lost Children
Access to Beach (Roads)

Environmental

Hazards on water entry
Drops and Ledges
Glass and Sharps

Craft

Craft Loading
Craft Storage

During program Risks:

Behavioural Factors

Sunburn
Effects of exercise
Injury
Panic
Fatigue
Lost Children

Environmental

Heat
Cold
Strong Winds
Hazards on sandbars
Rip Currents
Dangerous surf
Marine Life
Glass and Sharps
Sand
Rocks

Craft

Capsize
Damaged Craft
Collision
Public Surfcraft
interaction

Post program Risks:

Behavioural Factors

Dehydration
Fatigue
Public
Lost Children
Sunburn
Injury
Access to Transport (Roads)

Environmental

Hazards on beach access
Drops and Ledges
Glass and Sharps

Craft

Craft Loading
Craft Storage

Assessment of Risk:

Identified Risk	Likelihood	Consequence	Level of Risk
Human Factors			
Lack of ocean knowledge	High	High	High
Sunburn	High	High	High
Effects of exercise	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Lack of beach knowledge	High	Moderate	Moderate
Dehydration	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Injury	Moderate	High	Moderate
Public Interaction	High	Low	Moderate
Lost Children	Low	High	Moderate
Access to Beach	Low	Moderate	Low
Access to Transport	Low	Moderate	Low
Panic	Low	Moderate	Low
Fatigue	Low	Moderate	Low
Environmental Factors			
Rip Currents	High	Moderate	High
Dangerous surf	Moderate	High	High
Drops and Ledges	High	High	High
Heat	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Cold	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Marine Life	Low	High	Moderate
Hazards on sandbars	Low	High	Moderate
Sand	High	Low	Moderate
Rocks	Low	Moderate	Low
Strong winds	Moderate	Low	Low
Hazards on water entry	Low	Moderate	Low
Glass and Sharps	Low	Moderate	Low
Craft Factors			
Capsize	High	High	High
Craft Loading	High	Low	Moderate
Craft Storage	High	Low	Moderate
Collision	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Public Surfcraft	Low	High	Moderate
Damaged Craft	Low	Moderate	Low

Level of Risk – Legend

High – Constant prevalence of risk, detailed research and management planning.

Moderate – Prevalence of risk is regular but manageable, responsibility specified.

Low – prevalence of risk is rare and easily managed by routine procedures.

Proposed Risk Management Strategies:

Lack of Ocean/Beach Knowledge – High/Moderate

1. Prior Education
In most cases SEA will provide students with an in-school theory education lecture to familiarize students with ocean hazards, safety and survival techniques, prior to the practical program.
2. Use of flotation devices
Floatation devices such as foam boards, boogie boards & learn to surf boards are used as a learning tool to enable the participant to learn about the ocean in a real environment
3. Instructor's use of flotation devices.
Staff members of each group will use a floatation device to account for any loss of participants floatation device. The remaining instructors will instruct without craft to give them the ability to assist the participant's maneuverability within the surf break and outside the surf break.
4. Paddling/Swimming Experience
In most cases and subject to conditions and venue options, all participants will be trained in paddling/swimming techniques and skills in both flat water and white water conditions prior to entering the ocean. Lack of paddling skill will not increase the risk in basic programs but will lead to groups being split to cater for ability and fitness levels. Instructors will adapt the course to suit the group.
5. Provide comprehensive water safety supervision and rescue service.
SEA will provide a maximum one to ten Instructor/participant ratio and a one to eight ratio in the water. All instructors are required to obtain the SLSA Bronze medallion or equivalent, Senior first aid certificate, SEA Training Instructors certificate and will have acquired at least 30 hours water safety on SEA programs prior to becoming an instructor. Most Instructors will also have high-level experience in surf competition and/or ocean lifeguarding.

Sunburn (Heat) - High

1. Provision of sun-screen if not supplied by group coordinator
2. Provision of shade area
3. Provision of red UV protective rash vests for use in the water (mandatory – unless council regulations prohibit).
4. Instructors are to encourage the use and reapplication of sunscreen, and drinking of water throughout the program.
5. Incident reports will be completed and presented to National Operations Manager.

Rip Currents - High

1. Head instructors and venue manager to monitor the beach conditions prior to and during the program.
2. Instructors are to identify appropriate rip currents for use in the education of the participants. These should be well away from other hazards and be flowing in a constant predictable manner (As used by surfers/Lifeguards/Lifesavers regularly).
3. Instructors are to educate students (advanced programs) on the safe use of rip currents for movement through the swash zone. When using currents,

emphasis should be placed on maintaining contact with their board (flotation device).

4. Instructors are to ensure that alternative activities carried out on the sandbank (beginner programs) are kept an adequate distance from rip currents, as determined by the head instructor and venue manager.

Dangerous Surf – High

1. Head instructor and Venue Manager to monitor the beach conditions prior to the program.
2. Decision to be made regarding safety in relation to wave height prior to the program. This should include consideration of the type of wave breaking, and the depth and quality of the sandbank.
3. During large surf, communication with the local lifeguards is paramount to ensure all parties are comfortable with the decided course of action.
4. All activities during larger surf are to take place on a large, wide, stable sandbank, with care and supervision to avoid movement towards rip currents.
5. If in doubt regarding surf conditions program should be moved to back up venue, with all necessary parties to be notified.

Drops and Ledges – High

1. Movement of participants should take place in a predetermined and regular manner, with care taken to avoid drops and ledges.
2. Participants should also be moved in a controlled manner with teachers assistance.

Capsize - High

1. SEA will always endeavour to provide participants with education on paddling, wave catching, and wave riding skills prior to entry into the surf, including flat water skills.
2. Students will be instructed to maintain contact with their boards at all times (ie no intentional falling off/pushing off etc).
3. Some instructors are to use boards at all times, and give these boards to students when necessary due to normal loss of boards.
4. One instructor must maintain their board at all times for use in rescues as a flotation device.

Lost Children - Moderate

1. Movement of participants between activities will always be conducted in an organized manner.
2. SEA Participants will be easily identifiable by red coloured rash vests during the program.
3. SEA Staff, assisted by school teachers will be at the front, rear and throughout the group.
4. Participants who require to leave the group at any point must first ask the head instructor, and then leave with a friend (minimum 2 per group) and report back to the head instructor on their return.
5. Supervising teachers are to conduct constant head counts of students throughout the program.
6. In the event of a lost child, council Lifeguard assets may be asked to be used to make a general announcement where possible.

7. Program activities will cease while a child is lost to free up all available staff to assist in the search.
8. If deemed necessary by the venue manager or school staff, police will be called to assist in the search.
9. Incident reports will be completed and presented to National Operations Manager.

Effects of exercise - moderate

1. Participants will begin each session with a light stretch and warm up to avoid unnecessary and avoidable soft tissue injuries.
2. Participants will be given ample recovery time between each physical activity.
3. Participants will be given time, and encouraged to maintain fluid intake throughout the program.
4. SEA Programs will, under normal circumstances, only operate on beaches with a lifeguard service, in severe cases Lifeguards may be asked to assist in the maintenance of a patient prior to emergency services arrival. This would be classed as a medical emergency and would require Lifeguard involvement to administer oxygen. All basic first aid equipment should be provided by SEA.

Dehydration (Heat)- Moderate

1. Provision of water during the program.
2. Provision of shade during the program.
3. Provision of red UV Protective rash vest (mandatory use)
4. Instructors to provide encouragement of adequate fluid intake throughout the day.

Injury – Moderate

1. All SEA programs should not include activities where injury can easily result.
2. Participants will be warmed up with gentle stretching.
3. Any pre-existing injuries or conditions are to be identified by staff prior to program through consent forms, as compiled and indicated by supervising teachers.
4. It is accepted that injuries can occur in any environment at any time, if these occur staff are adequately trained in first aid and first aid equipment is provided.
5. In any serious case these injuries will be immediately reported to emergency services, with first aid continuing until handover.
6. Incident reports will be completed and presented to National Operations Manager.

Public Interaction – Moderate

1. SEA Programs are designed to minimize their impact on the beachgoing public.
2. Instructors and Venue Operators are to identify areas for use which will have minimal disruption to the public.
3. When moving groups on public thoroughfares students must keep the left in two lines, allowing for passing and overtaking space.
4. If any issues are identified by SEA, Public or Council the Venue Manager, and National Operations Manager must be immediately notified to determine an appropriate course of action.

Cold – Moderate

1. Where possible, programs which are to be run in cold weather will include the provision of wetsuits by SEA.
2. Programs will keep participants active and moving to maintain body heat.
3. In the event of participants participating in cold weather, students will be allowed at any point to withdraw from the program and immediately get changed into dry clothes.
4. In the event of hypothermia first aid principles apply until the arrival of emergency services.
5. Incident reports will be completed and presented to National Operations Manager.

Marine Life - Moderate

1. Venue Operator and Instructors are to assess conditions prior to program.
2. In the case of marine stingers, a decision will be made based on the prevalence of the stingers and weather conditions. Where necessary use of alternative venue will be adopted to minimize the hazard.
3. If students are stung by marine stingers, basic first aid principles apply, with referral to further treatment if necessary. Emergency services will also be contacted if necessary.
4. Regarding sharks, staff will assess conditions including the prevalence of baitfish in the water before determining whether a program will go ahead or be moved to an alternative venue.
5. If a shark is spotted in the water, students will be evacuated to predetermined emergency evacuation points. Staff will liaise with lifeguards regarding the completion, transferal or abandonment of the program.
6. Staff must account for all students once out of the water and maintain calm among the students.
7. Most SEA programs will be run in the middle of the day between 9am-3pm to minimize the shark hazard risk, by avoiding their most active times of the day.
8. Incident reports will be completed and presented to National Operations Manager.

Hazards on Sandbars - Moderate

1. Instructors are to teach proper water entry techniques in sequence. This include wading over shallow water, the dolphin diving at appropriate depths.
2. No activities are to be done in plunging waves unless hands-on assistance is provided by the instructor in low ratios (one instructor to two students – advanced programs only).

Collision – Moderate

1. Students will be catching waves in small groups spread apart from each other.
2. An instructor will be in the wave catching zone to monitor students paddling onto waves.
3. Any collisions and resulting injuries will be dealt with applying appropriate first aid principles, and referral where necessary.
4. Incident reports will be completed and presented to National Operations Manager.

Public Surfcraft – Moderate

1. Venue Manager and Instructors to assess the beach prior to program and determine an appropriate area for activities to take place.
2. Ideally this area will be away from the public surfing area (Outside blue flags). This should also be determined in conjunction with the local lifeguard service to minimize disruption to the swimming public.
3. SEA will avoid areas highly populated by surfers and swimmers wherever a safe alternative is possible.

Craft Loading/Storage - Moderate

1. Ample area is provided to allow easy movement of boards by staff only.
2. Staff are to carry a maximum of four boards each.
3. Boards are not to be left in any public thoroughfare and cause congestion or hazard to the public, staff, and participants.

Communications Strategies

1. During large programs, each head instructor and the venue manager will have a UHF radio tuned to channel 7.
2. The Venue Manager will have a mobile phone at all times in the case of an emergency.
3. School teachers will have contact details of Venue Manager.

First Aid and Rescue Equipment

SEA will provide appropriate first aid and rescue equipment as necessary for the program. All advanced emergency equipment is also available through lifeguards in the event of a medical emergency. SEA equipment will include;

- First Aid Kit including; gloves, resuscitation masks, band aids, bandages, gauze, saline, antibacterial creams, betadine, water, splinter probes, space blankets, ice packs, etc.
- Rescue equipment including; boards (program boards), rescue/lifeguard boards (as necessary after discussion with lifeguards/surf clubs), rescue tubes.

At any venue, SEA will endeavour to make arrangement with the Surf Lifesaving Club to have available first aid room space and the use of equipment in an emergency situation and as necessary. SEA makes every attempt to work with the Lifeguard Services on any beach in a collaborative manner, to allow the most efficient delivery of emergency or rescue care where possible.

Evaluation:

Given the risks involved with the SEA Program, the following will be undertaken to ensure best practice is achieved;

- Recording and review of preventative actions taken by water safety officials.

- Recording and review of rescues
- Recording and review of first aid incidents
- Qualitative analysis of program format from program coordinators perspective, instructors, and participants.

Personnel Responsible:

The program coordinator nominated by SEA will be responsible for the implementation of this plan and all safety. SEA will communicate with the Council lifeguards on the day of the program.

EMERGENCY PLAN

In any emergency SEA Staff will provide first aid, rescue and movement of the patient as necessary to provide the safety of rescuers, bystanders, the patient, and other participants. In any emergency, the appropriate emergency services will be notified for assistance. This process will be conducted with clear and open communication to all supervising teachers.

The following emergency contact information should be kept with the venue manager, venue operator, operations manager, and supervising staff;

School/College/Tour Group-

During school hours:	After school hours:
Teacher in charge:	Mobile:
Accommodation:	Hospital:

The venue manager, operations manager must have a mobile phone at all times.

Emergency/Safety Procedures

The venue manager will carry a list of emergency contact numbers for the group participating in the program. All staff will be adequately qualified in first aid.

A First Aid kit for the treatment of minor illnesses will be carried by, or have within easy access to the venue manager at all times.

In the case of an accident or medical emergency, immediate medical treatment will be sought and the participant may be transported to the nearest hospital. The venue manager will communicate to the supervising teacher in charge.

In the event of an emergency, the Teacher in charge will contact the school and perform all internal communications with the school. SEA Staff will communicate developments to the teacher in charge.

Contact with the participants parents or guardians will be the responsibility of the school, or teacher in charge.

Evacuation of Water or Beach

In the event of an evacuation being necessary (shark, tsunami etc), students will be instructed to proceed quickly and calmly to a designated meeting point away from the immediate beachfront. Checks will be made to ensure attendance. If students are absent appropriate searches will be conducted.

Emergency Response Flow Chart



